DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 148 088 EC 103 552

AUTHOR	Pickett, Anna Lou
TITLE	The Utilization and Training of Paraprofessionals in Special Education: Results of a Survey of State Directors of Special Education and Descriptions of Training Programs.
INSTITUTION	City Univ. of New York, N.Y. Center for Advanced Study in Education.
SPONS AGENCY	Bureau of Education for the Handicapped (DHEW/OE), Washington, D.C.
REPORT NO	CASE-12-77
PUB DATE	77
GRANT	G007601963
NOTE	28p.; For related information, see EC 103 551-554
AVAILABLE FROM	The New Careers Training Laboratory, Center for Advanced Study in Education, Graduate School and University Center, City University of New York, 184 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10010
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 Plus Postage. HC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Demonstration Projects; Elementary Secondary Education; Exceptional Child Research; Federal Legislation; *Handicapped Children; *Institutes (Training Programs); Models; *Paraprofessional School Personnel; *Program Descriptions; Schools; *Staff Utilization; Surveys
IDENTIFIERS	Education for All Handicapped Children Act

ABSTRACT

Presented are findings of a study on the utilization of paraprofessionals in public school programs for handicapped children; and provided are descriptions of four program models for training paraprofessionals working with handicapped children. Results are reported for the following areas: number of states and territories responding, number of paraprofessionals employed in public school programs, certification and reimbursement procedures, state plans and regulations, and training. Among conclusions are that approximately 46,000 paraprofessionals are being used in public school special education programs and that the majority of the states still do not certify paraprofessionals in special education. Descriptions are offered for the following training models: the Kansas Model, designed to establish a statewide training inservice network for paraprofessionals; the Pennsylvania Training Model, designed as an inservice program to train teachers, teacher-assistants, administrators, and ancillary personnel who work with the severely/profoundly handicapped; Project ASSIST, a series of three pre and inservice training programs designed to prepare paraprofessionals to enter the field of special education as well as expand the knowledge and skills of those already working with handicapped students; and Project SELECT, designed to enable all personnel in special education to meet the mandates for development and training established by P.L. 94-142 (the Education for All Handicapped Children Act). (SBH)

Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes eve effort to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal reproducibility are often encountered and this affects t quality of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDR EDRS is not responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made fr the original.

ED148088

The Utilization and Training of Paraprofessionals in Special Education: Results of a Survey of State Directors of Special Education and Descriptions of Training Programs

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Anna L. Pickett

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

Anna Lou Pickett

New Careers Training Laboratory
Center for Advanced Study in Education
The Graduate School and University Center
of the City University of New York

CASE 12-77
1977

EC 103558

This paper is one in a series prepared by the New Careers Training Laboratory as part of work supported by the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped, USOE (Grant number G-007-601-963).

The papers in the series are: 1) The Paraprofessional Movement in Special Education: Historical Perspective (A Review of the Literature), 2) Training of Paraprofessionals in Special Education: A Selected Bibliography, 3) Task Analysis for Paraprofessionals Working with Severely/Profoundly Handicapped Children and in "Mainstream" classrooms, 4) The Training and Utilization of Paraprofessionals in Special Education, 1977; Survey Results and Descriptions of Training Programs. They may be obtained from: The New Careers Training Laboratory, Center for Advanced Study in Education, Graduate School and University Center, City University of New York, 184 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10010.

The project was under the leadership of Anna Lou Pickett. We are appreciative of the assistance given to the work by Frances Dory, Mary-Beth Fafard, Phyllis Kelly and Barbara Reid, and the support of our project officer Edward Moore.

Alan Gartner
Project Director

The material contained in these papaers does not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U.S. Office of Education and no official endorsement of the U.S.O.E. snould be inferred.

Survey to State Directors of Special Education

This paper is the first of a two-part study undertaken by the New Careers Training Laboratory in 1976-77 to update and gather new information on the utilization and training of paraprofessionals in public school programs for handicapped children. The second paper reports the findings of a survey to institutions of higher education. In addition, each report contains brief descriptions of training programs for paraprofessionals in special education.

The first phase of the NCTL study sought information from the 50 states, 5 territories, and the District of Columbia on both the utilization and training of paraprofessionals in special education.

Information for this study was gathered in the following ways: a) a mail questionnaire to state and territorial directors of special education; and b) three regional conferences for personnel from state education agencies (SEAs), local education agencies (LEAs) and institutions of higher education (IHEs).

The information gathered during the regional conferences and in the survey indicates that much of the data in a prior NCTL study (The Training and Utilization of Paraprofessionals in Special Education: Present Status and Future Prospects - 1974) concerning salaries, career ladders, training needs and classroom activities in which paraprofessionals are involved is still valid. In fact, there has been every little change.

The summary of the data gathered in 1973-74 as to the utilization of paraprofessionals in public school programs for handicapped children resulted in the following information:

1. Approximately 27,000 paraprofessionals were being utilized in special education programs in public schools.
2. The majority of the states (42) did not certify paraprofessionals in special education.
3. There was widespread federal and state reimbursement for paraprofessionals services.
4. Investigatory phases indicated an anticipated increase in the utilization of paraprofessionals.
5. With the exception of isolated programs, a majority of the paraprofessionals had no preservice training. The inservice training was usually uncoordinated, often optional and at best, infrequent.
6. Teachers and paraprofessionals were not prepared for sharing a classroom and this was frequently a source of conflict in that the human aspect of two adults providing educational services, which were not clearly defined, led to misinterpretation by either or both parties.

7. A majority of the personnel interviewed, as well as persons contacted in surveys, indicated that paraprofessionals could be more effective, if a program of training, both inservice and preservice, were available.

The 1976 mail questionnaire to the state directors of special education was designed to ascertain the following information: 1) the number of states employing paraprofessionals in special education; 2) the number of paraprofessionals employed in special education; 3) the number of states reimbursing local school districts for the employment of paraprofessionals in special education; 4) the number of states reimbursing local school districts for training of paraprofessionals in special education; 5) the number of states certifying or licensing paraprofessionals in special education; and 6) the number of states providing for the utilization of paraprofessionals in their state plans.

A total of 56 questionnaires was mailed to all state and territorial directors of special education. Of this total, 39 states, 2 territories and the District of Columbia completed the questionnaire.

The results of the survey will be compared with the survey undertaken in 1973-1974.

Table - 1

Number of States and Territories Responding

	1973-74	1976-77
States	48	39
Territories	4	2
District of Columbia	1	1

Results of Survey

The responses from the state directors of special education in both 1973-74 and 1976-77 resulted in the following information as to the utilization of paraprofessionals in special education.

- In 1973-74, the estimated number of paraprofessionals serving in public schools was approximately 27,000.
- In 1976-77, the estimated number of paraprofessionals serving in public schools is approximately 46,000.

Table - 2

STATE ESTIMATES OF NUMBERS OF PARAPROFESSIONALS EMPLOYED IN PUBLIC SCHOOL PROGRAMS.

Number of Paraprofessionals

	1973-74	1976-77
0	1	1
1-50	11	1
50-100	7	3
100-200	8	7
200-300	6	3
300-600	9	7
600-1000	3	7
1000-3000	5	4
3000-5000	0	5
5000 and above	1	2
No estimate	3	2
No response	2	14

- The number of paraprofessionals reported as employed in public school programs for the handicapped is approximate for two reasons: 1) many states do not collect specific data on the number of paraprofessiojals employed (several of these did provide estimated numbers); and 2), for the 14 states and territories responding to the 1973-74 survey that did not respond to the latest survey, we have included in the current total number of paraprofessionals serving in programs for handicapped children the figures from that earlier survey. Thus, to the reported 44,000, we have added 2,000 for a grand total of 46,000. This is an increase of over 19,000.

In 1976-77, the states employing more than 1000 paraprofessionals included: Virginia, Texas, Oregon, New York, Missouri, Michigan, Maryland, Pennsylvania, California, Massachusetts and Illinois.

Certification and Reimbursement

In 1973-74, the majority of the states did not certify paraprofessionals.

The results of the 1976-77 survey indicate that most of the certification procedures apply to paraprofessionals working in all phases of public school education with no special criteria for those employed in special education programs. It should

be noted that states do not use the same definitions as to what constitutes a certification procedure, therefore, what one state defines as certification maybe termed a guideline for employment or permit in another.

In 1976-77, the survey as to certification and guidelines resulted in the following information:

- Twelve (12) states have certification procedures; they are: Delaware, Arkansas, Maine, New York, New Hampshire, Georgia, Vermont, New Mexico, Alabama, Ohio, Illinois, and wisconsin. Wisconsin is the only state that certifies paraprofessionals in special education.
- Thirteen (13) have guidelines for the employment of paraprofessionals.
- Eleven (11) states and territories do not have certification procedures or guidelines.
- Six (6) states and territories do not have certification procedures for paraprofessionals in special education. They are: Kansas, Maryland, New Jersey, Oregon, Texas and Guam.
- Most states that have guidelines or no certification procedures indicated an interest in developing procedures for certification in special education.

In 1973-74, 34 states indicated that they reimbursed their local school districts for the salaries of paraprofessionals.

Of the states and territories responding to the 1976-77 questionnaire, 26 reimburse local school districts for salaries of paraprofessionals either through state or federal funds. Only 10 states reimburse local school districts directly for training of paraprofessionals, 5 contract for the training of paraprofessionals and 6 provide it directly.

Table - 3

Certification and Reimbursement

	1973-73		1976-77	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Certification/Guidelines	9	42	25	17
Reimbursement for Salaries	34	20	26	16

State Plans and Regulations

Of the 42 states and territories that responded to the survey in 1976-77, 20 indicated that there are state regulations governing or mandating the utilization of paraprofessionals in special education, 14 do not have regulations with regard to utilization, 2 (Nevada and Kentucky) have provisions for utilization on an optional or experimental basis, and 6 did not respond to tne question.

With regard to inclusion of the utilization and training of paraprofessionals in the state plan as submitted to BEH, 17 states have included paraprofessionals, 17 have not, the plans in 3 states are in preparation, and 5 states did not respond to the question.

Table - 4

Inclusion in State Plans and State Regulations

	Yes	No	Optional	No Response
State Regulations	20	14	2	6
State Plans Submitted to BEH	17	17	3	5

Training

The majority of the states and territories (27) responding to the questionnaire do not provide reimbursement for training to LEAs to contract for it or provide it directly, 12 states indicated that they use one or more of these systems to insure training of paraprofessionals, and three did not respond to the questions.

A description of four training models developed by SEA's follows the summary of the data.

One state, Kansas, has a Coordinator for Special Education Paraprofessional Programs. This places them in the unique position of being able to plan for and coordinate the development of utilization and training of paraprofessionals on a systematic basis. Many states are just now beginning to collect specific data on the utilization of paraprofessionals in order to develop inservice training programs and certification procedures. In fact, most states report that the responsibility for inservice training is the responsibility of the LEAs.

Summary of Data - 1976-77

Research into the utilization and training of paraprofessionals in programs for handicapped children has resulted in the following information:

1. Approximately 46,000 paraprofessionals are being used in special education programs in public schools. This is an increase of almost 19,000 over the number reported in the 1974 NCTL study.
2. The majority of the states still do not certify paraprofessionals in special education; however, there is widespread interest in developing certification procedures.
3. Only 17 of the states and territories reporting have included the training or utilization of paraprofessionals in their state plans.
4. The majority of the states do not provide for training of paraprofessionals eitner through reimbursement to LEAs, direct provision or contract for it. Training is primarily the responsibility of LEAs.

Conclusions

The utilization of paraprofessionals in education for handicapped children is steadily increasing.

Many of the conclusions reached in 1974 are still valid at this time. There is still little in the way of systematic utilization of paraprofessionals, carefully established job descriptions, and organized training programs on a pre-service inservice basis.

In order for SEAs and LEAs to meet the mandates of PL 94-142, as well as the priorities established by the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped, USOE, for personnel development, there must be greater cooperation among governmental officials, institutions of higher education, and professional organizations.

In a later report on IHEs, it will be seen that more training programs are being developed in response to the growing demands for trained personnel from LEAs. There is, however, still a long way to go to develop a coordinated delivery of services.

The role of the professional organizations in encouraging the systematic utilization of trained paraprofessionals will be studied in greater depth during the second grant year. It is, however, crucial for these organizations to become more involved in the partnership to insure the success of these activities.

Description of Training Models

Several states are currently developing program models for training paraprofessionals working with handicapped children. Four individual projects are described below. They are:

1. The Kansas Model - This program is designed to establish a statewide training inservice network for paraprofessionals. This is a cooperative effort between the SEA, Leas and IHEs within the state.
2. Pennsylvania Training Model - This model is specifically designed as an inservice program to train teachers, teacher-assistants, administrators and ancillary personnel who work with the severely/profoundly handicapped.
3. Project ASSIST - This program has been developed by Indiana University in cooperation with the Indiana Division of Special Education. Training materials have been designed to be utilized on a decentralized basis for training paraprofessionals.
4. Project SELECT - This project has been designed by the Arizona Division of Special Education and IHEs to enable all personnel in special education to meet the mandates for development and training established by PL 94-142. The name and address of the person to contact for further information on each project is included in the description.

Kansas State Department of Education
Division of Special Education
Phyllis Kelly - Director Special Education Paraprofessional Programs
120 East 10th Street
Topeka, Kansas 66612
913/296-3866

The Bureau for the Education of the Handicapped, USOE, nas funded a three year program to develop a training network for paraprofessionals in special education in the state of Kansas starting in the fall of 1977.

Kansas is the only state that has a Director of Programs for Paraprofessionals in Special Education. This places them in a unique position to plan and develop programs dealing with the utilization and training of paraprofessionals on a statewide basis as well as to offer coordinated technical assistance to LEAs.

In 1976, the State Department of Special Education began to develop two models to train paraprofessionals to work in the area of special education. In addition to training paraprofessionals to work more effectively in special education programs, teachers were trained to utilize paraprofessionals in their classroom more effectively.

The two models were: (a) a facilitators model and (b) a series of regional workshops for paraprofessionals and teachers.

The objectives of the Facilitators Model were twofold:

1. To assist LEAs and or cooperatives in developing and implementing their own plan for inservice training of special education paraprofessionals.
2. To train a select group of persons to plan and help implement an inservice program for special education paraprofessionals at the district or co-op level.

Local LEAs or cooperatives were asked to designate an individual to receive training as a facilitator. Participation by LEAs in the program for this first year was on a voluntary basis and was intended to serve as a model for expansion to all areas of the state by the second year.

The persons selected to receive the training to become facilitators attended four training meetings throughout the school year. They were trained in the following areas (a) developing competencies, skills, techniques and activities for establishing a model peculiar to the districts needs; and (b) developing needs assessment procedures and various group strategies.

Nine regional workshops to train paraprofessionals and teachers were conducted starting in October and ending in February. Some of the subjects discussed in the workshops were: (a) exploration of the emerging roles for special education paraprofessionals, (b) providing specific techniques in behavioral management, (c) assisting in instruction, (d) program development, and (e) professional communication.

During the next three years these objectives and activities will be expanded in order to develop a comprehensive statewide training network.

Some specific objectives are:

a. To establish accepted statewide competencies for paraprofessionals which would be used as the basic elements in the training program.

b. To continue and expand the program of training local facilitators to train paraprofessionals.

c. To develop a package of media and resource materials concerned with paraprofessional training.

d. To involve higher education personnel in the training network, with some of these educators directly involved in the training and developing curricula for pre-service training.

e. To place special emphasis on expanding existing programs which train paraprofessionals to work with the severely handicapped.

f. To establish licensing procedures and requirements for special education paraprofessionals based upon competencies, curricula and cooperative arrangements developed during this program.

g. To expand the scope of the present paraprofessional newsletter prepared by paraprofessionals for paraprofessionals in order to develop a strong sense of role identification among paraprofessionals.

More information on the program may be obtained by contacting the Kansas State Department of Special Education.

The Pennsylvania Training Model

Ellen Somerton Fair, Project Director
Slippery Rock State College - Education Building
Slippery Rock, Pennsylvania
412/794-7388

The Pennsylvania Training Model (PTM) is a field-based inservice program designed to train supervisors and administrators, teachers, teacher assistants and ancillary personnel involved with the education of the severely and profoundly handicapped.

It is a BEH funded project developed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Division of Special Education and has been carried out over the last three years, 1974-1977.

The overall goals of the PTM are: (a) to train educational personnel to design and implement programs for the severely/profoundly handicapped throughout the state and (b) to develop materials for teaching the severely/profoundly handicapped.

Approximately 1300 persons throughout the state are involved in programs for the severely/profoundly handicapped and are eligible for training through the PTM. This figure includes 450 teachers, 625 teacher assistants, 125 ancillary personnel and 100 program administrators and supervisors.

Because of the large number of people eligible and the geographical distance involved, a decision was made to divide the state into two parts and deliver the training in the western part of the state during the second grant year and the eastern part during the third grant year. The first year was utilized for development and planning.

The training is delivered through a series of workshops which are scheduled for Fridays and Saturdays. Five worksnop topics are spaced throughout the year to allow the teacners time to try out procedures, get feedback on their effectiveness and to formulate specific questions concerning the changes tney could make in their programs as they relate to the workshop content.

The Friday sessions are geared toward the needs of administrative and ancillary personnel and the Saturday sessions are aimed primarily at teachers and teachers assistants. Participants in the workshops receive inservice credit with the number of credits received dependent upon the number of sessions attended.

All trainees are expected to attain competencies in the following program areas:

1) Program management 2) Motor Development 3) Self Care 4) communication and 5) Parent Involvement.

The following training materials have been developed and are available:

1. Fair, M. Ellen Somerton; Turner, Keith D. What To Teach? How to Teach? Did I Teach? (The Systematic Educational Planning and Evaluation of Instructional Programs for the Severely and Profoundly Handicapped) 1975, Pennsylvania Training Model.
2. Fair, Ellen Somerton; Turner, Keith D. Assessment and Systematic Educational Programming. The Pennsylvania Training Model.
3. Course Outlines and Competency Specifications for Inservice training model.
4. Description of development and design of Pennsylvania Training Model.
5. Slide tape and video tapes containing edited training sessions.

Project SELECT
Arizona Department of Education
Division of Special Education
Jerrie Ueberle, Director
1535 West Jefferson Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007
602/271-3183

The Arizona Department of Education, Division of Special Education, has initiated a program for delivering competency based training to personnel working with handicapped persons. The project is called SELECT.

The Special Study Institutes are open to all school personnel, parents and others who have an interest in working with children with special needs. School personnel includes administrators, special education teachers, regular classroom teachers, para-professionals, and other ancillary staff. The courses are based on competencies required for establishing programs in main-streaming, special education, classrooms and administration and management of special education programs under PL. 94-142.

Each Special Study Institute has been designed for a target population: The Institute Instructor is responsible for addressing the competencies of the Institute as set forth in each component.

The procedures for having Special Study Institutes conducted on-site in any geographic region of the state are outlined below.

1. A school, private facility, or agency assesses the training needs of their staff and selects specific components from the SELECT brochure to meet the identified training needs. Should the identified needs differ from the available components, a new training component may be designed to address the identified need.
2. The Division of Special Education staff matches the request with available Special Study Institute Instructors and schedules the training for the coming semester.
3. A schedule of SELECT training is printed and disseminated three times yearly. The brochures are mailed to county and district school superintendents, elementary and secondary principals, approved private schools serving special education students, state agencies, professional organizations, previously enrolled participants and other persons requesting information.
4. Persons select components and competencies which meet their individual training needs.
5. Special Study Institutes are provided at no cost to participants enrolling for a personal/professional growth experience. If university credit is desired, both undergraduate and graduate credit are available and applicable to Special Education Certification. Northern Arizona University approves and provides supervision to the SELECT Series in conjunction with the Arizona Department of Special Education.

6. Institute Instructors are required to evaluate each participant at the completion of each training component. Participants are required to evaluate each Institute at the completion of each component. Evaluations are based on whether or not each of the stated competencies are achieved.

The program is financed by Title VI D funds. In addition persons taking the courses for credit pay a registration fee. The university receives 90% of the fee and the State Department 10% to help meet administrative and other overhead costs.

A catalog of components in the program and competencies that participants are expected to achieve is available.

Project ASSIST
Richard White
Developmental Center, Indiana University
2853 E. 10th Street
Bloomington, Indiana 47401
812/337-9716

Project ASSIST - Associate Instructional Support for Teachers - is a series of three pre and inservice training programs designed to prepare paraprofessionals to enter the field of special education as well as expand the knowledge and skills of those already working with handicapped students.

The project was developed by the Developmental Training Center at Indiana University in cooperation with the Indiana Department of Public Instruction, Division of Special Education.

The overall objectives of the program are to provide paraprofessionals with knowledge of:

1. The role of a paraprofessional as an instructional associate, the role of the teacher as a program manager, and the ways both of them work together under the leadership of the teacher for the benefit of the student.
2. Past and current trends in society's beliefs and attitudes toward handicapped individuals, and how these beliefs and attitudes effect programs and services for the handicapped.

The skill areas are in:

1. The implementation of instructional and instructionally related duties.

2. The implementation of non-instructional duties.

To achieve these objectives the training program has been divided into pre- and inservice training. The preservice content can be introduced to the teachers and paraprofessionals in a training workshop or it may be self-taught. The preservice component provides the paraprofessional with an overview of relationships with the teacher, students and educational settings.

The inservice component of the program is the heart of the training. The teacher serves as the trainer of the paraprofessionals. This enables the teacher to receive training in paraprofessional utilization and program management. The instructional material is self-paced and allows the trainer to spend more time on the units that have the most relevance to classroom needs.

The following training programs have been developed by Project ASSIST:

Program I: Moderately Handicapped - This training program is designed to prepare paraprofessionals to work with students who are moderately handicapped. There are eight instructional units in the program. The program has been distributed throughout the state of Indiana and is now available for national dissemination.

Program II: Mainstreaming - This training program is designed to prepare paraprofessionals to work with mildly handicapped students (learning disabled, educable mentally retarded, and emotionally disturbed) who are preparing to return or have returned to regular class placement. The program is now available for the 1977-1978 school year.

Program III: Pre-School - This training program has been designed to prepare paraprofessionals who will work with the handicapped or developmentally delayed pre-school child either in an educational setting, in the home or both. The program will be field tested during the 1977-78 school year and will be available for dissemination in 1978-79.

In addition, plans are underway to develop a program to train paraprofessionals to work with the severely and profoundly handicapped.

The following instructional and training materials are included in all programs:

- Sourcebook for paraprofessionals (Instructional Associates); each paraprofessional needs a copy
- Teacher guide; each teacher needs a copy
- 16 mm instructional films for both pre- and inservice training. The films may be purchased or rented.